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## Viewing cable 04BUENOSAIRES3067, AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH FM BIELSA

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- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">04BUENOSAIRES3067</a>	<a href="#">2004-11-01 17:02</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Buenos Aires</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1364384-el-temor-oculto-del-gobierno-a-nuevos-actos-terroristas>

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BUENOS AIRES 003067

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/29/2014

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [AR](#) [UNSC](#) [MEETINGS](#) [WITH](#) [AMBASSADOR](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH FM BIELSA

REF: A. STATE 223883

[1](#)B. BUENOS AIRES 3041

[1](#)C. STATE 232102

Classified By: Ambassador Lino Gutierrez, Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Ambassador Gutierrez met October 29 with Foreign Minister Bielsa to deliver a letter from Secretary Powell congratulating Argentina on its selection to the UN Security Council and to review other bilateral and regional issues. The Ambassador expressed his satisfaction with the strong state of bilateral ties and reiterated our continued support for strengthening democracy and strong economic growth in Argentina. The Ambassador also expressed appreciation for Argentina's leadership role in Haiti and in support of constitutional democracy in Bolivia. FM Bielsa said Argentina was committed to Haiti for the long haul and is considering sending additional troops. He said Haiti would be a priority for Argentina when it assumes its seat on the UNSC. On Venezuela, Bielsa believed the situation had improved since the referendum, but noted he was still concerned with Chavez's rhetoric and was closely monitoring proposals to restrict the freedom of NGO's. On Cuba, Bielsa said relations with the Castro regime had become distinctly cooler recently as a result of the government's refusal to grant a travel permit to Dr. Molina to visit her family in Argentina. He said that if Senator (First Lady) Cristina Kirchner did visit Cuba next year, she planned to meet with the wives of the jailed dissidents (Panuelos Blancos). However, he doubted the visit would happen since he expected the Castro government would not permit the meeting with the dissidents. The FM expressed his hope that a meeting with Secretary Powell would prove possible in December. End

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Summary.

12. (C) Ambassador Gutierrez met October 29 with Foreign Minister Raphael Bielsa to convey the letter from the Secretary Powell congratulating Argentina on its selection to

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the United Nations Security Council (reftel A). The Ambassador, who was accompanied by the DCM and POLCOUNS, also took the opportunity to review a wide range of bilateral and regional issues of mutual concern. The MFA Director for North American Affairs, Ambassador Vicente Espeche Gil also sat in on the meeting. On delivering the letter, the Ambassador stated we looked forward to working closely Argentina on the Security Council and that we would be contacting them soon, both here and with their Mission in New York, to arrange for working level consultations on the range of key issues facing the Council, especially security issues such as counterterrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

13. (C) FM Bielsa assured the Ambassador of his willingness to cooperate closely with us on Security Council matters. Bielsa then said "speaking of the Security Council," that for Argentina, the situation in Haiti would be one of their top priorities when they assumed their seat in January. Bielsa (who recently returned from a visit to Haiti) said Argentina was fully committed to Haiti for the "long haul" and that this commitment included sending additional Argentine troops to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti. Bielsa said MINUSTAH was "only the beginning" of what needed to be a concerted effort by the international community to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to assist in Haiti's reconstruction. He said there was an urgent need for "clear politics, sound management, money and more people" if the international effort in Haiti were to succeed. He said the GOA was preparing papers on its thinking on Haiti and would forward them to us.

14. (C) Reflecting on his recent visit to Haiti, Bielsa said the situation was very worrying and very complex. He stressed the need to take preventative measures against violence which he believed originated from many sectors, both political and criminal. The situation was exacerbated he said by the total breakdown of capacity within the country. What little infrastructure that remained was rendered useless by the lack of maintenance. He described the actions of Argentine troops in Haiti as "heroic" noting that medical staff had treated over 3,000 patients since their arrival. Bielsa said the deployment of Argentine troops to Haiti had been unpopular domestically and that the government had been accused of being the "Marines of the U.S." but that it was important for Argentina to act responsibly and in concert with its neighbors on hemispheric issues. The Ambassador reiterated the thanks both President Bush and Secretary Powell had expressed to the GOA for their assistance in Haiti and stressed that this was an important example of what we can accomplish together regionally.

15. (C) The Ambassador said our bilateral relations with Argentina in general, and on specific issues in particular, were strong. He assured Bielsa of continued USG support for the strengthening of democracy and for strong economic growth in Argentina noting we were watching closely the ongoing debt restructuring efforts. The Ambassador referred to the recent meeting between Assistant Secretary Noreiga and Deputy Foreign Minister Taiana in Washington as an example of how we were working to increase cooperation between our countries on both bilateral and multilateral issues. The Ambassador also welcomed the upcoming visit to Washington by MFA Under Secretary for Foreign Policy Roberto Garcia Moritan for the

SIPDIS

November 22 pol-mil talks as another example of our increasing cooperation. The Ambassador said that the request for a meeting between Bielsa and Secretary Powell had been submitted but that the schedules for both were already very complicated during the proposed December timeframe. (Comment: Bielsa quickly indicated his availability during the first week of December again demonstrating his keen desire for a meeting.) When asked about the possible ramifications of next week's presidential elections, the Ambassador underscored the constancy of U.S. strategic interests in the region.

16. (C) Turning to other regional issues, the Ambassador thanked Bielsa for his efforts in supporting the constitutional government in Bolivia. The Ambassador underscored our concerns about human rights and the future of democracy in Venezuela, noting the DCM had recently met with the MFA Under Secretary for Latin American Affairs Dario Alessandro to raise the potential arrest warrants for SUMATE leaders and the proposed restrictions on foreign funding for NGO's supporting human rights (reftel B). Bielsa responded that he believed the situation in Venezuela was better than it was before the referendum but that the GOA was closely monitoring the NGO situation. He said that he had sent instructions to Argentina's mission in Caracas to maintain its dialogue with all segments of Venezuelan society and that

the GOA would continue to work quietly but firmly behind the scenes in support of democracy. The Ambassador emphasized that President Kirchner occupies a special position with Chavez and is in a position to exert a very positive influence.

17. (C) On Cuba, Bielsa said relations with the Castro regime had gone into a deep freeze in recent months adding that Castro's refusal to grant a travel permit to Cuban scientist Hilda Molina and her mother to visit her son and his family in Argentina had become a major stumbling block. He said the GOA was doing all it could to secure travel permits for Molina and her mother and had difficulty understanding why Castro was so opposed. He added the Molina problem had become a "bottom line, non-negotiable" issue for the GOA and, barring a resolution, made a proposed visit by First Lady (and Senator) Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner to Cuba unlikely. Bielsa said, however, that if the First Lady did travel to Cuba, it would be contingent on her being allowed to visit with dissident spouses (the so-called "ladies in white") which he did not think likely. (Comment: Bielsa did not even mention the possibility of a visit by President Kirchner.)

18. (C) Turning to security issues, Bielsa asked the Ambassador how the GOA was doing in cooperating with the U.S. on border security in the Tri-border region. The Ambassador said we had received excellent cooperation from all branches of the Argentinean security services. Bielsa commented that there were different views of the problems in the Tri-border region reflecting the different optics of those concerned, e.g. the tourism, commercial and security sectors. However, Bielsa stressed that the GOA was "very attentive" to our security concerns in the Tri-border area.

19. (C) On other security issues, the Ambassador informed Bielsa of the invitation to observe multilateral maritime exercises in support of the President's Proliferation Security Initiative in Key West, Florida in November (reftel C). He thanked Bielsa for his previous support of the PSI. Bielsa thanked the Ambassador for the invitation to send observers calling it "fantastic."

10. (C) Comment: Bielsa was positive and forthcoming on all the issues we raised with him. Of particular import was his unequivocal statement that Argentina would be in Haiti for the long haul and is considering sending additional troops. Also of considerable interest were Bielsa's comments on the cooling relationship with Cuba. His commitment that a potential visit by the First Lady to Cuba was contingent on Cuba's allowing her to meet with dissidents was especially welcome and represented new policy ground for the GOA.

11. (C) The conversation with Bielsa demonstrated clearly that the GOA is prepared to move forward in a substantive manner on increased cooperation with the U.S. as set forth in the proposed action agenda discussed recently in the meeting between Assistant Secretary Noreiga and Deputy Secretary Taiana. Bielsa's eagerness to meet with the Secretary also is a strong indication of his desire to move our bilateral cooperation to a new level. End Comment.

GUTIERREZ